

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-41 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 6 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Drawings

The Examiner approved the proposed drawing corrections as filed on August 13, 2002. In response to this Office Action, Applicants have filed corrected drawings that incorporate the proposed changes to Fig. 14.

Specification

The Examiner requested Applicants' cooperation in correcting any errors, in the lengthy specification, of which they may become aware. Currently, Applicants are unaware of any errors in the specification.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claim 6 as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Specifically, the Examiner asserted that claim 6 is not properly dependent because the range of slope inclination in claim 6 is broader than that in claim 1. In as much as the Examiner may now attempt to apply this objection to claim 1, Applicants respectfully traverse it because the range in the last clause of claim 1 (as previously set forth in claim 6) is not inconsistent with that as set forth in the 3rd clause of claim 1.

The slope ranges as set forth in claim 1 pertain to different ones of the optical path changing slopes. That is, in the 3rd clause of claim 1, a repetitive prismatic structure is set forth as having optical path changing slopes "at least a portion of which are aligned ... at an inclination angle in a range of from 35 to 48 degrees with respect to a plane of said transparent film." For example, the optical path changing slopes A1 as shown in Figs. 1A-H may have an

angle in a range of from 35 to 48 degrees.¹ Accordingly, because only “at least a portion” of the slopes are of this type, claim 1 allows for some of the optical path changing slopes to have an angle outside the range of from 35 to 48. That is, the 3rd clause of claim 1 does not necessarily set forth an angle range for all of the optical path changing slopes in the repetitive prismatic structure.

In the last clause of claim 1, it is intended to encompass, in addition to the “at least a portion” of the optical path changing slopes as set forth in claim 1, all the optical path changing slopes having “an inclination angle of not smaller than 35 degrees”. For example, the optical path changing slopes A2, as shown in Figs. 1B, G, and H, are not smaller than 35 degrees.² And because the last clause of claim 1 recites “an inclination angle of not smaller than 35 degrees”, it overlaps the 3rd clause range of 35 to 48 degrees. Therefore, the claim 1 last clause recitation does not exclude any of the “at least a portion” of optical path changing elements as set forth in the 3rd clause of claim 1, but is meant to include those slopes as well as any slopes A2 that are also present. See the specification at the paragraph bridging pages 23 and 24, and at page 26, lines 9-11.

In light of the above, claim 1 (that includes the subject matter previously set forth in claim 6) is definite as written.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter from claim 6 and, therefore, is the same as previously set forth claim 6. The Examiner did not apply any prior art against claim 6, and the objection to claim 6 is believed to have been overcome. Accordingly, claim 1 is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Likewise, dependent claims 2-5, 7-11, and 41, are believed to be in condition for immediate allowance.

¹ Specification at page 21, lines 10-12, for example.

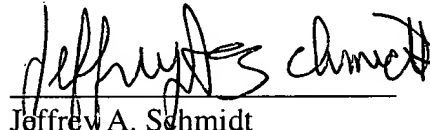
² Specification at page 22, lines 5-8, for example.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: January 31, 2003

APPENDIX
VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 6 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) An optical film comprising:

a transparent film comprising at least one layer forming at least one surface of said transparent film;

an adhesive layer provided on said one surface of said transparent film, said adhesive layer having a refractive index different by 0.1 or less from a refractive index of said at least one layer of said transparent film; and

a repetitive prismatic structure provided on the other surface of said transparent film, said repetitive prismatic structure having optical path changing slopes at least a portion of which are aligned in a substantially constant direction at an inclination angle in a range of from 35 to 48 degrees with respect to a plane of said transparent film,

wherein a projected area, onto said film plane, of flat surfaces each having an inclination angle of not larger than 5 degrees with respect to said film plane is not smaller than 10 times as large as a projected area, onto said film plane, of the slopes each having an inclination angle of not smaller than 35 degrees with respect to said film plane.